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Writing systems and pronunciation: romanization

Rules of romanization of geographical names applied in Poland

Summary**

One of the activities of the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names outside the Republic of Poland involves the establishment of romanization rules governing names of geographical objects originally rendered in non-Roman writing systems. As part of that activity, the Commission has adopted, for each language, both rules of transliteration and rules of Polish phonetic transcription. There are some exceptions for Asian languages: for Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Lao, Burmese and Khmer, only transliteration is recommended. Moreover, for the majority of regional and local official languages, Polish phonetic transcription rules have not yet been developed.

Altogether, the Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names outside the Republic of Poland has adopted romanization rules for 37 languages. The Commission applies, without formal adoption, rules for another 40 languages. Among 30 rules adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, the Commission recommends rules for 12 languages. In the case of 15 other languages, which are in the agenda of the Working Group on Romanization Systems, although they were not formally adopted by the Conference, the Commission recommends rules for 6 of them. In addition, the Commission applies romanization rules for 33 languages not listed on the website of the Working Group.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Maciej Zych, Commission on Standardization of Geographical Names outside the Republic of Poland. The report is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/63/CRP.63.

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